

AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application.

1-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A compound of the general structure (I)

$[\text{HC}(\text{CRR}'\text{R}'')\text{(CRR}'\text{R}'')]^+ [\text{M}_2\text{X}_9]^-$ (I),

wherein

R is independently hydrogen or a group of the formula $\text{M}'\text{R}^1\text{R}^2\text{R}^3$,

R' is a group of the formula $\text{M}'\text{R}^4\text{R}^5\text{R}^6$,

R'' is hydrogen, a C_1 to C_{12} alkyl, a C_6 to C_{14} aryl or a C_7 to C_{20} alkylaryl,

M is Zr or Hf,

M' is Si, Ge, Sn or Pb,

X is a halogen atom, and R^1 to R^6 is a C_1 to C_{12} alkyl group, a C_6 to C_{14} aryl or a C_7 to C_{20} alkylaryl.

16. (Previously Presented) A compound according to Claim 15 wherein M' is Si or Sn.

17. (Currently Amended) A compound according to Claim 15 with the general structure (Ia)

$[\text{HC}(\text{CHRR}')_2]^+ [\text{M}_2\text{X}_9]^-$ (Ia),

wherein

R is a group of the formula $\text{SiR}^1\text{R}^2\text{R}^3$,

R' is a group of the formula $\text{M}'\text{R}^4\text{R}^5\text{R}^6$,

R'' is hydrogen, a C_1 to C_{12} alkyl, a C_6 to C_{14} aryl or a C_7 to C_{20} alkylaryl,

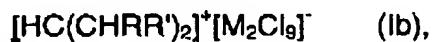
M is Zr or Hf,

M' is Si, Ge, Sn or Pb,

X is a halogen atom, and

R¹ to R⁶ is a C₁ to C₁₂ alkyl group, a C₆ to C₁₄ aryl or a C₇ to C₂₀ alkylaryl.

18. (Previously Presented) A compound according to Claim 15 with the general structure (Ib)



wherein

R¹ to R⁶ denote for methyl.

19. (Previously Presented) A catalyst of the general structure (I) according to claim 15.

20. (Previously Presented) A catalytic composition comprising a compound of the general structure (I) according to Claim 15.

21. (Previously Presented) A process for homo- or co-polymerizing isoolefines, comprising polymerizing at least one isoolefin, optionally in the presence of further copolymerizable monomers, in the presence of a compound of the general structure (I) according to Claim 15.

22. (Previously Presented) A process according to Claim 21, wherein the isoolefin is isobutene.

23. (Previously Presented) A process according to Claim 21, comprising polymerizing isobutene and isoprene.

24. (Previously Presented) A process according to Claim 22, further comprising the presence of one or more co-polymerizable monomers.

25. (Previously Presented) A process according to Claim 23, further comprising the presence of one or more co-polymerizable monomers.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Previously Presented) A method of homo- or copolymerizing an olefin comprising polymerizing an olefin in the presence of a compound comprising an anion of the general structure $[M_2X_9]$ in which M is Zr or Hf and X is a halogen atom.

28. (Previously Presented) A compound comprising a cation of the general structure (III)



wherein R is independently hydrogen or a group of the formula $M'R^1R^2R^3$,

R' is a group of the formula $M'R^4R^5R^6$,

R'' is hydrogen, a C_1 to C_{12} alkyl, a C_6 to C_{14} aryl or a C_7 to C_{20} alkylaryl,

M' is Si, Ge, Sn or Pb, and

R^1 to R^6 is a C_1 to C_{12} alkyl group, a C_6 to C_{14} aryl or a C_7 to C_{20} alkylaryl.

29. (Currently Amended) A method of stabilizing a compound of the general structure (II)



in which

R is a group of the formula $M'R^1R^2R^3$,

R'' is hydrogen, a C_1 to C_{12} alkyl, a C_6 to C_{14} aryl or a C_7 to C_{20} alkylaryl,

M is Zr or Hf,

M' is Si, Ge, Sn or Pb

X is a halogen atom, and

R^1 to R^3 is a C_1 to C_{12} alkyl group,

comprising stabilizing a compound of the general structure (II) with a compound R' of the formula $M'R^4R^5R^6$, in which M' is Si, Ge, Sn or Pb and R^4 to R^6 is a C_1 to C_{12} alkyl group.